



285

DIGITAL
EDITION

TODD
MCFARLANE

JASON
SHAWN
ALEXANDER

SPAWN





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PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

Al (Spawn) is captured by the government and although he goes peacefully, the guards wrestle him to the ground and try to take off his mask. When they discover that the mask and suit are fused to his body, Spawn is sent to a special facility to be questioned. After hours of Spawn's silence he finally speaks to the agents, agitating them so fiercely that one of them pulls a knife on Spawn. But, to everyone's surprise, he stabs himself. Shocked by what has just happened, the agents call in reinforcements who beat Spawn so badly he appears dead. With no vital signs, Spawn is taken to the morgue where an autopsy is begun.




WHY ARE
YOU HESITATING?
I GAVE YOU AN
ORDER.

I UNDERSTAND,
BUT THIS PROCEDURE
SEEMS TO BE EXCESSIVE
IF ALL WE'RE TRYING
TO DO IS IDENTIFY
HIM.

I CAN'T
PROMISE HIS FACE
WILL REMAIN
INTACT.



THAT'S MY
CALL. NOT
YOURS.



AND WHEN IT
COMES TO THE POTENTIAL
SAFETY MATTERS OF OUR
NATION, THERE'S NO SUCH
THING AS EXCESSIVE. JUST
DO YOUR JOB.



WE'RE
READY,
DOCTOR.



THEN LET'S
PROCEED.

ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

INITIATING CRANIAL INCISION.

ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

A MILLIMETER FROM CONTACT, THE MEDICAL BONE SAW IS ENSNARED BY WHAT THE DOCTOR WILL LATER DESCRIBE AS "ERRATIC HUMAN FLESH TISSUE" WITH A "SEVERE REFLEX IMPULSE."

AND FOR ALL THOSE WHO WITNESSED THIS EVENT, THEIR BIGGEST MISTAKE WILL BE TRYING TO DOWNPLAY WHAT THEY SAW.

THIS WILL PROVE TO BE FATAL TO SOME.

THIS WILL PROVE TO
BE FATAL TO SOME.

AND FOR ALL THOSE WHO WITNESSED THIS EVENT, THEIR BIGGEST MISTAKE WILL BE TRYING TO DOWNPLAY WHAT THEY SAW.



JESUS CHRIST!



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

IT... WE SHOULDN'T CONTINUE, SIR. I NEED TO RUN MORE TESTS.



HE'S DEAD!

AND YOU SAID YOUR TESTS WEREN'T RELIABLE. WASHINGTON WANTS AN IDENTIFICATION AND THEY DIDN'T SPECIFY THAT THE PATIENT HAD TO BE IN ONE PIECE TO GET IT.

SO, MOVE PAST YOUR MEDICAL CONCERNS AND ANY PERSONAL GUILT.



YES, SIR.



MOMENTS
LATER.

HAS THIS
HAPPENED
BEFORE?

NO. NOT EVER.
MY BLADES ARE TITANIUM.
THEY DON'T EVEN
SCRATCH, LET ALONE
SHATTER.



SO,
WHAT AM I TO
REPORT?

I DON'T
KNOW. I CAN'T
EXPLAIN IT.

THEN I
SUGGEST YOU
TRY. BECAUSE IF
I CAN'T DELIVER A
PLAUSIBLE REASON WHY
WE WERE UNABLE TO
I.D. THIS MAN, NONE
OF US WILL HAVE
A JOB.



EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

WHAT'S
THAT
NOISE?

SHIT!
THE MACHINES
ARE MALFUNC-
TIONING!



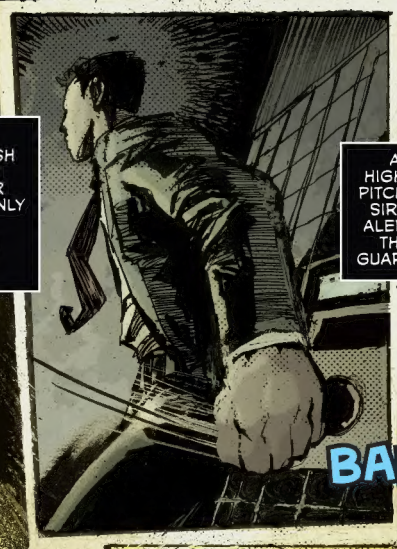
THEY STAND FROZEN,
WONDERING WHAT'S
THEIR NEXT MOVE.



GASP



AND LIKE SOME
STRANGE, FREAKISH
'FRANKENSTEIN'S
MONSTER'... THEIR
PATIENT HAS SUDDENLY
**COME
ALIVE!**



A
HIGH-
PITCHED
SIREN
ALERTS
THE
GUARDS.



please.
make...
it...





WHAT
THE
F*CK?

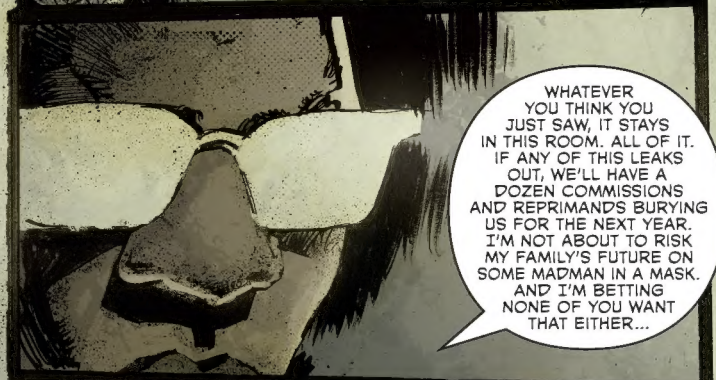
GUARDS!
TAKE THIS MAN
TO THE ISOLATION
WARD. AND DON'T LET
ANYONE TALK TO HIM.
NO ONE!



THE
ISOLATION
WARD?
THAT'S ONLY
FOR THOSE
THAT...



QUIET! YOU
LISTEN TO ME
AND YOU LISTEN
TO ME GOOD--
EVERY ONE
OF YOU.



WHATEVER
YOU THINK YOU
JUST SAW, IT STAYS
IN THIS ROOM. ALL OF IT.
IF ANY OF THIS LEAKS
OUT, WE'LL HAVE A
DOZEN COMMISSIONS
AND REPRIMANDS BURYING
US FOR THE NEXT YEAR.
I'M NOT ABOUT TO RISK
MY FAMILY'S FUTURE ON
SOME MADMAN IN A MASK.
AND I'M BETTING
NONE OF YOU WANT
THAT EITHER...



"...SO YOU'LL WRITE YOUR REPORTS,
KEEPING THE LANGUAGE IN IT AS
NON-ALARMING AS POSSIBLE.
THEN YOU'LL DIRECT ALL QUESTIONS
TO MY OFFICE.



"YOU DO THAT...
I JUST MAY BE
ABLE TO SALVAGE
ALL OUR JOBS.

"BECAUSE IF THERE'S ONE THING
I KNOW, IT'S THAT BY THE TIME THEY
PROCESS OUR REPORTS AND QUERY
OUR GUEST, WEEKS WILL GO BY AND
PEOPLE *MUCH MORE* POWERFUL
THAN US WILL BE FIGHTING TO
TAKE OVER THIS CASE.

"AND IF WE ALL KEEP OUR
HEADS DOWN, TODAY WILL
SOON BE FORGOTTEN."



Prisoner Number : A1889CH426- 23F
First Name Unknown Last Name: Unknown
Date of Birth Unknown. Last known address N/A
Country of Citizenship: Unknown.
Height 6' 3" Weight 375 (confirmed) why??



NOTES: The prisoner has refused to eat or drink anything brought to his cell. All he does when in his confined space is sleep (or at least he appears to be). When forced to move outside his cell he doesn't appear to be losing any strength or muscle mass. We will continue to monitor but our recommendation would be to move him with some of our other inmates. Perhaps socializing with other will help bring him out of his shell.

For now he does not appear to be a threat to himself or others.



ANOTHER OF OUR TOP STORIES CONTINUES TO BE THE IDENTITY, YET UNKNOWN, OF THE MAN CAPTURED IN TIMES SQUARE OVER NINE DAYS AGO. AT THE TIME, HE WAS WEARING A MASK TO HIDE HIS FACE. FEDERAL AUTHORITIES HAVE YET TO RELEASE THE SUSPECT'S NAME, OR TO SUGGEST A MOTIVE BEHIND HIS VERY PUBLIC ABDUCTION... AND THEN EQUALLY PUBLIC RELEASE... OF WORLD RENOWNED RAP SINGER BONZ CHILLIN'.

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS AGREE THAT THE UNIDENTIFIED MAN SEEMS TO HAVE APPEARED AND VANISHED AT WILL. WHAT'S REMARKABLE IS THAT NO FEDERAL SPOKESPERSON HAS BEEN WILLING TO SUGGEST AN EXPLANATION.

NO VIDEO OF EITHER OF THOSE EVENTS HAS SURFACED AT PRESENT. THOSE WITNESSES TO THE INCIDENTS ARE STANDING FIRMLY BEHIND THEIR ACCOUNTS OF WHAT THEY SAW.



OUR SOURCES IN WASHINGTON TELL US THAT SOME PLAYERS IN THE ADMINISTRATION HAVE TAKEN A SPECIAL INTEREST IN THIS STORY, AS IT MAY INVOLVE A PERSON WHO IS NOT A CITIZEN OF THIS COUNTRY. ONE TOP AIDE, WHO SPOKE TO US ON THE CONDITION OF ANONYMITY, SAID THAT A COUPLE OF THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISORS ARE CONCERNED THIS COULD HAVE BEEN SOME SORT OF TERRORIST ATTACK. THEY ARE HESITANT TO GO ON THE RECORD UNTIL THEY HAVE THE FACTS TO BACK UP THIS ALLEGATION.

ONE G.O.P. REPRESENTATIVE WAS OVERHEARD AS SAYING, "OF COURSE THERE'S A TERRORIST CONNECTION HERE, THE MAN HAS DARK SKIN." HE AND HIS STAFF LATER TOOK BACK THOSE REMARKS.

A PRESS CONFERENCE HAS BEEN CALLED FOR LATER TODAY, TO GIVE A STATUS REPORT ON THIS CASE.



I AM SO SICK OF ALL THE **DISHONEST** REPORTING BY PEOPLE TRYING SO HARD TO BE **POLITICALLY CORRECT!** YOU THINK TERROR GROUPS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST HAVE **RED HAIR** AND **BLUE EYES?** **GET OVER YOURSELVES!!**

I'M **NOT** SAYING EVERYONE WITH DARK SKIN IS A POTENTIAL CRIMINAL OR TERROR THREAT. ALL I'M TRYING TO MAKE CLEAR IS THAT IF THIS **SUSPECT** WAS AN AMERICAN **CITIZEN**, IT WOULDN'T TAKE OVER A WEEK TO FIND OUT WHO HE **IS**. WITH ALL THE DAMN **SURVEILLANCE** THEY'RE DOING ON ALL OF US, IT'S **IMPOSSIBLE** FOR ME TO BELIEVE THEY COULDN'T HAVE FOUND OUT HIS NAME AND WHERE HE LIVED BY NOW.

HELL, THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS EVERYTHING **ABOUT US!** I BET THEY'VE GOT A RECORD OF HOW MANY TIMES I WATCH **PORN** ON WEEKENDS! SO, IF IT'S TAKING THEM THIS LONG, THEN MY GUESS IS THAT THE MASKED-MAN IS FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY. **MARK MY WORDS!**

WASHINGTON, D.C.

OBSOULETLY,
AS WE'VE
STATED NUMEROUS
TIMES THIS PAST WEEK,
ANYONE UNDER
DETENTION BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF
HOMELAND SECURITY
WILL BE GIVEN THEIR
PROPER DUE PROCESS,
AS WE TRY AND
ASCERTAIN THEIR
IDENTITY AND
COUNTRY OF
ORIGIN.

IN THIS
PARTICULAR CASE,
THE ACCUSED HAS
DECIDED TO REFRAIN
FROM ANSWERING ANY
OF OUR QUESTIONS AND
WE ARE CURRENTLY
PREPARING TO GIVE HIM
THE LEGAL COUNSEL HE
IS AFFORDED BY
U.S. LAWS.

WHAT THIS
ADMINISTRATION AND
THE PRESIDENT ARE MOST
CONCERNED ABOUT, IS MAKING
SURE THAT THIS PARTICULAR
SUSPECT IS NOT AN ILLEGAL
ALIEN, HERE IN OUR COUNTRY
FOR THE PURPOSE OF
THREATENING OUR
CITIZENS.

AND THOUGH
HE MAY INDEED BE
A CITIZEN OR LEGAL
RESIDENT OF THIS COUNTRY,
UNTIL WE CAN VERIFY THOSE
FACTS, WE WILL CONTINUE TO
MOVE FORWARD IN THE
MOST JUDICIOUS WAY
POSSIBLE.

NOW IF
THERE ARE ANY
QUESTIONS..?



IS THE
PRESIDENT
WORRIED THAT IF
THIS LINGERS MUCH
LONGER IT COULD
HURT HIS
RE-ELECTION
CHANCES?

THEN WHY
DID HE TWEET
THAT THE D.H.S.
WASN'T DOING ITS
JOB? HE USED THE
WORD 'HORRIBLE' TO
DESCRIBE YOUR
DEPARTMENT.

THE
PRESIDENT
ISN'T CONCERNED
ABOUT HIMSELF.
HE'S CONCERNED
ABOUT THE
AMERICAN
PEOPLE.

THE
PRESIDENT IS
AS FRUSTRATED
AS WE ARE, BUT
AS I SAID, WE ARE
PATIENTLY HOPING
THE SUSPECT WILL
CHANGE HIS MIND
ABOUT SPEAKING
TO US.



STRANGE, ISN'T IT,
THAT NO COUNTRY OR
GROUP HAS COME OUT TO
CLAIM YOU AS THEIR OWN?
HARD TO BELIEVE, WITH YOUR
'ODDITIES,' THAT YOU'RE JUST
A ROGUE AGENT.

BUT NO
MATTER. I'VE BEEN
NOTIFIED THAT SOON
YOU'LL BE GETTING A
LAWYER. WHICH IS TOO BAD,
BECAUSE I'VE SO BEEN
ENJOYING OUR 'QUIET TIME'
TOGETHER. BUT WE STILL
HAVE ANOTHER DAY
BEFORE THAT HAPPENS,
WHICH MEANS YOU'LL
GET ONE LAST
SERVING...

"...OF WATER."

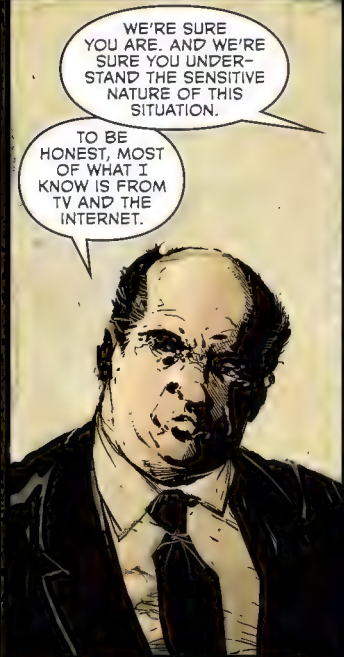
"SUNLIGHT."

"AND HUMAN
INTERACTION."



SORRY FOR KEEPING YOU WAITING SO LONG MR. TORREY, BUT WE WANTED TO BE SURE EVERYONE HERE IS ON BOARD WITH YOUR NEW POSITION. AS YOUR FIRM'S PARTNERS BRIEFED YOU, THIS CLIENT YOU ARE ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE HAS BEEN WITHOUT LEGAL REPRESENTATION. SO YOU WILL BE THE FIRST TO BE SPENDING ANY MEANINGFUL TIME WITH HIM.

I'M AWARE OF MY OBLIGATIONS.

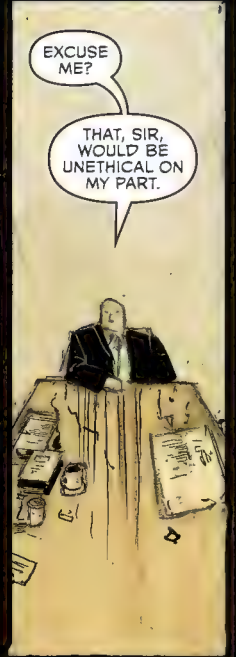


WE'RE SURE YOU ARE. AND WE'RE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE SENSITIVE NATURE OF THIS SITUATION.

TO BE HONEST, MOST OF WHAT I KNOW IS FROM TV AND THE INTERNET.



AND THAT'S GOOD. BUT WHAT THE PUBLIC EXPECTS FROM US, AND WHAT WE'RE TASKED TO ACTUALLY DO, CAN BE TWO ENTIRELY DIFFERENT THINGS. WHAT THAT MEANS FOR YOU IS THAT ANY INFORMATION YOU MAY ACQUIRE DURING YOUR TIME WITH OUR PRISONER, WE'D GREATLY APPRECIATE YOU BRINGING IT TO OUR ATTENTION FIRST.



EXCUSE ME?

THAT, SIR, WOULD BE UNETHICAL ON MY PART.



I'LL MAKE SOMETHING VERY CLEAR TO YOU.



WE DON'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT YOUR ETHICS!



AND WE DON'T GIVE A SHIT HOW THE PRESS SPINS IT. SO, WHILE YOU'RE HERE, YOU'LL BE TAKING ORDERS FROM US. AND SINCE YOU'VE JUST BECOME A NEW PARTNER IN YOUR FIRM, I'M SURE YOUR OTHER PARTNERS WOULD LIKE YOU TO MAKE ALL THIS GO AS SMOOTHLY AS POSSIBLE.



PERFECT.
EVERYTHING'S
FALLING IN
PLACE.

AL SIMMONS SITS IN THE DARK GOING OVER HIS PLAN ONCE AGAIN, SMILING AT HOW HIS ENEMY'S EGO AND ARROGANCE HAS MADE THEM 'TARGETS' TO BE EXPLOITED. TO BE CONNED.

THE MILITARY DIDN'T CAPTURE HIM... HE **WANTED** TO BE CAPTURED. THAT'S WHY HE TOLD THEM WHERE HE'D BE. WHY HE KIDNAPPED ONE OF THEIR OWN AND WHY HE MADE ALL OF IT SO VERY, VERY PUBLIC.*

HE KNOWS HIS ENEMIES ARE OUT THERE. CAMOUFLAGED IN HUMAN SKIN. HOLDING POSITIONS OF POWER AND INFLUENCE ACROSS THE GLOBE--BECAUSE THEY'VE BEEN ABLE TO BEND THE WILL OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TO HELP THEM ACCOMPLISH PARTS OF THEIR ULTIMATE GOALS.

SO, INSTEAD OF TRYING TO HUNT FOR THEM, SPAWN WOULD MAKE THEM COME TO HIM. FIRST, BY LETTING THEM KNOW HE WAS BACK... AND SECOND, THAT HE WASN'T AFRAID OF THEM. THE INTERNET AND MEDIA PUT THAT MESSAGE OUT ACROSS THE WORLD FOR HIM.

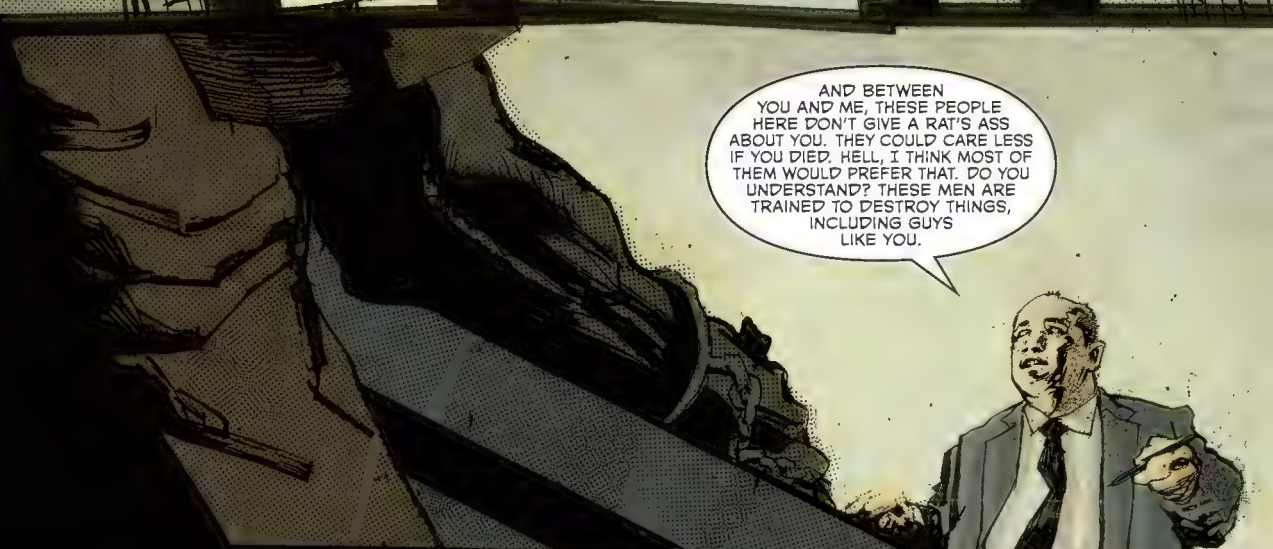
NEXT, HE NEEDED THEM TO TAKE HIM CLOSER TO THOSE WHO SPAWN WILL EVENTUALLY GET ANSWERS FROM. AND BECAUSE SOME OF THESE 'MEN' ARE NOT EVEN HUMAN, HE KNEW THEY COULDN'T JUST LET HIM CONTROL THE GAME. SO, HE'S ALLOWED THEM TO BEAT HIM. HE'S FAKED HIS HUNGER. FAKED HIS SUBMISSIVENESS. FAKED THAT SOMEHOW HE'S AFRAID.

IN FACT, HE'S BEEN FAKING **EVERYTHING!** HE KNOWS HIS ENEMY WILL EVENTUALLY DO EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTS THEM TO DO... EVEN IF THEY DON'T KNOW THEY'RE DOING IT.



AND EACH TIME THE ENEMY THINKS THEY'RE GETTING THE UPPER HAND, SPAWN IS INCHING CLOSER TO WHAT HE WANTS.

...YOU HAVE TO EAT. SOMETHING! ANYTHING. YOU WON'T BE ANY GOOD TO ME OR YOURSELF IF YOU'RE NOT MENTALLY PREPARED.



AND BETWEEN YOU AND ME, THESE PEOPLE HERE DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT YOU. THEY COULD CARE LESS IF YOU DIED. HELL, I THINK MOST OF THEM WOULD PREFER THAT. DO YOU UNDERSTAND? THESE MEN ARE TRAINED TO DESTROY THINGS, INCLUDING GUYS LIKE YOU.



YOU CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THEY'RE CAPABLE OF DOING.



I KNOW EXACTLY WHO THEY ARE.



FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, SPAWN'S LAWYER TRIES EVERYTHING HE CAN TO CONVINCE AL, THAT HIS ONLY GOAL IS TO MAKE HIM A FREE MAN.

BUT AS HIS CLIENT FALLS BACK INTO TOTAL SILENCE, THE ATTORNEY REALIZES HE'S FAILED.



AND THAT FAILURE ULTIMATELY LEADS TO ELEVATING THINGS TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

HERE'S
YOUR NEW
INMATE, WARDEN.
THE PAPERWORK
WILL BE SENT
OVER LATER
TODAY.

THANK
YOU BOYS.
HOPE HE
DIDN'T CAUSE
YOU ANY
PROBLEMS?

NO,
SIR.

I'M CURIOUS.
WHAT MAKES YOU
SO SPECIAL THEY
HAD TO BRING
YOU TO ME?

I ASKED
YOU A
QUESTION,
SON.

OH,
THAT'S
RIGHT...

YOU
DON'T SPEAK
MUCH, DO
YOU?



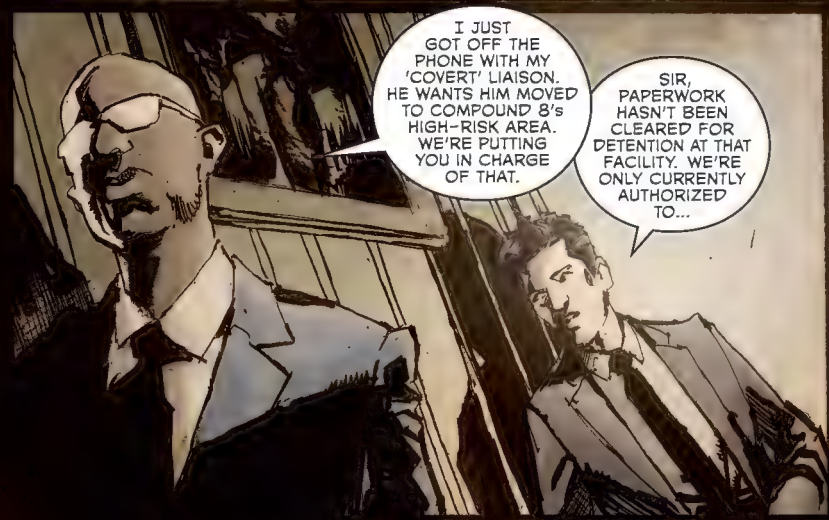
THAT'S ENOUGH. LET HIM BE.



KINGSTON! DID YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID?



THUMP



I JUST GOT OFF THE PHONE WITH MY 'COVERT' LIAISON. HE WANTS HIM MOVED TO COMPOUND 8'S HIGH-RISK AREA. WE'RE PUTTING YOU IN CHARGE OF THAT.

SIR, PAPERWORK HASN'T BEEN CLEARED FOR DETENTION AT THAT FACILITY. WE'RE ONLY CURRENTLY AUTHORIZED TO...

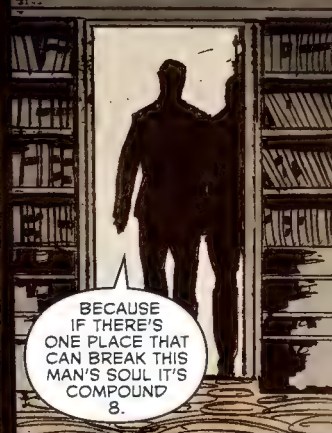


STOP! DID I ASK YOU TO SPEAK?



WE HAVE INMATES THERE THAT ARE MORE THAN WILLING TO 'ASSIST' US IN FINDING A WAY TO CRACK OPEN THIS SON OF A BITCH.

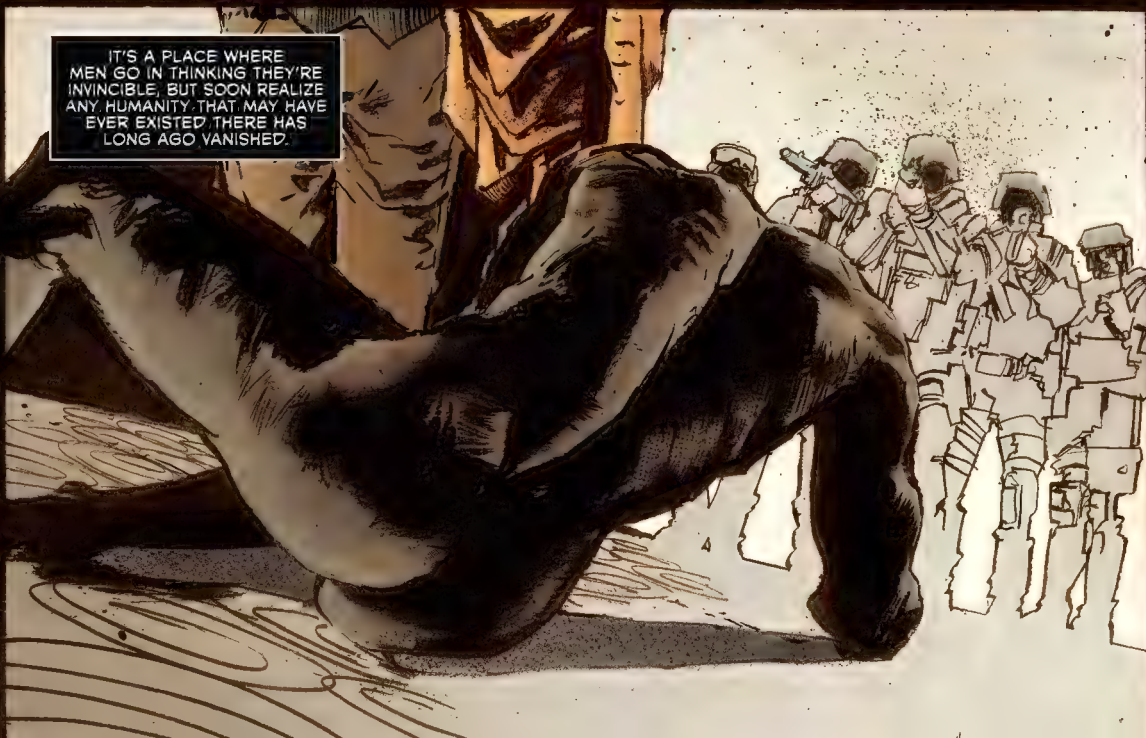
IF WE CAN'T GET ANSWERS, I'M SURE THEY'LL HAVE A FEW TRICKS THEY CAN USE. YOU'D BE SURPRISED WHAT A PERSON WITH A 'LIFE SENTENCE' WILL DO TO HAVE THEIR JAIL TIME SHORTENED.



BECAUSE IF THERE'S ONE PLACE THAT CAN BREAK THIS MAN'S SOUL IT'S COMPOUND 8.



MOST AGENTS ONLY HEAR RUMORS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS INSIDE. BUT VERY FEW MEN HAVE WITNESSED WITH THEIR OWN EYES, WHAT ACTUALLY GOES ON.



IT'S A PLACE WHERE MEN GO IN THINKING THEY'RE INVINCIBLE, BUT SOON REALIZE ANY HUMANITY THAT MAY HAVE EVER EXISTED THERE HAS LONG AGO VANISHED.



MEET YOUR
NEW FRIENDS,
MASKED-MAN. THEY
LOVE WHEN I BRING
THEM *FRESH*
MEAT.

AND THOUGH NONE OF THEM
SEE IT, A TINY SMIRK CROSSES
SPAWN'S LIPS BECAUSE, AS
THEY'LL FIND OUT LATER...

THIS IS
EXACTLY
THE
PLACE HE
WANTED
TO BE AT.

TO BE CONTINUED

SPAWNING GROUND

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MONTHLY CONTEST

WIN a 10 minute Skype call with Todd McFarlane and some COOL McFarlane toys and comics!

Each month readers will be giving a secret code word available ONLY in Spawning Ground.

Enter that code word HERE:
mcfarlane.com/spawningground for your chance to win awesome prizes!

Spawn issue #285 Code Word: **SPAWNOVERTHECITY**

Winners will be notified by email two weeks after the release of the comic.

Good Luck!

Thank you, as always, for being loyal fans of Spawn!

Shannon Bailey
Publishing Coordinator



NEXT ISSUE

On the trail of his wife's killer, Spawn plants the seed that will lead him to the mysterious murderer.



STAR TREK

THE NEXT GENERATION

MIRROR BROKEN

TRAVEL INTO THE DANGEROUS "MIRROR, MIRROR" ALTERNATE REALITY FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH THE NEXT GENERATION CREW!

SCOTT TIPTON, DAVID TIPTON (W) • J.K. WOODWARD (A) • GEORGE CALTSOUDAS (C)

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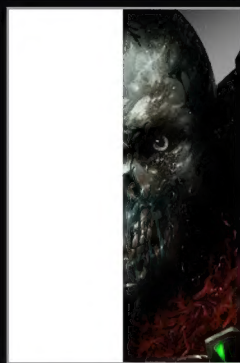
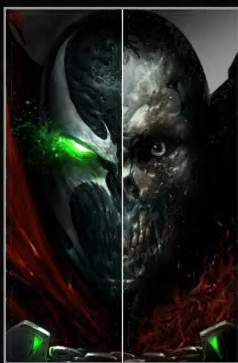
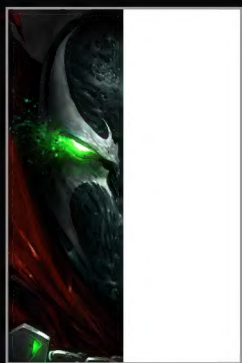
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WE believe in comics

“The joy of having worked in the comic industry for over 30 years has allowed me to see new generations of creators that bring their own special styles, stories, and voices to an industry that must always strive to be current and relevant.”

—Todd McFarlane



SPAWN

TODD McFARLANE JASON SHAWN ALEXANDER

ISSUE TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY-FIVE